

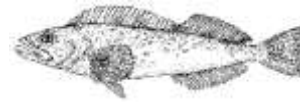
ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

NEWS RELEASE



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FISHERY ANNOUNCEMENT

PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND COMMERCIAL

LINGCOD SEASON OPENING

E.O. 2-GF-E-10-12

The directed commercial fishing season for lingcod *Ophiodon elongatus* in the Prince William Sound (PWS) Management Area will open July 1, 2012, and will close December 31 or earlier by emergency order. Guideline harvest levels (GHL) are 7,300 pounds for the Inside and 25,300 pounds Outside Districts, including adjacent federal Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) waters.

To facilitate achievement of biological sampling objectives, emergency order #2-GF-E-10-12 requires lingcod be delivered with the head attached and with the vent and one-inch area forward of the vent intact as evidence of gender. Retained lingcod must measure at least 35 inches from the tip of the snout to the tip of the tail.

To participate in the directed lingcod fishery, fishermen must possess a gear-appropriate Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission lingcod permit card and a PWS nonexclusive groundfish area registration. Groundfish registrations can be obtained at department offices in Anchorage, Homer, Soldotna, and Cordova or via Cordova office fax (907-424-3235). Fisherman targeting lingcod in the EEZ should obtain a Federal Fisheries Permit (FFP). FFP application forms are available at National Marine Fisheries (NMFS) offices in Homer, Anchorage, or Seward and online at: <http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/ram/FFPAPP.pdf>.

Regulations close directed fishing for groundfish, including lingcod, within three nautical miles of two PWS area Steller sea lion rookeries, Seal Rocks and Wooded Island (Fish Island). For specific descriptions of these closure areas, contact NMFS in Kodiak at (907) 481-1780 or reference <http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/rr/tables/tab12.pdf>. These closures do not affect halibut fishing within these areas.

After July 1, lingcod may be retained as bycatch up to 20 percent of the directed harvest aboard a vessel. The 20 percent limit includes the total weight of all bycatch species aboard the vessel as described in regulation 5 AAC 28.070 (b), with the exception of Pacific cod which may be retained at a separate 20 percent bycatch level (5 AAC 28.267 (j)). Additionally, after July 1, lingcod taken incidentally by drift gillnet gear operated for salmon consistent with applicable state laws and regulations are legally taken and possessed.

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